



Healthy Start FAQ: Fatherhood Programs and Initiatives: Male Engagement

On June 11, 2015, the EPIC Center hosted a webinar highlighting the value for Healthy Start programs to develop male outreach and engagement strategies around building sustainable fatherhood programs or initiatives. This webinar was the second of a three part series, and was led by Makeva Rhoden, Program Management Officer for the Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services with the support of three Healthy Start grantees – Kenn Harris with New Haven Healthy Start, Kenneth Scarborough from REACHUP, Inc., and Toni Jolliffi from Strong Beginnings – all of whom provided insight into their experience with initiating and sustaining fatherhood programs and offered a variety of best practices for successful and sustainable fatherhood program implementation.

In case you or a colleague missed the presentation, a recording of the webinar can be found on the EPIC Center's [Training and Events Calendar](#).

During the webinar, participants asked several great questions, all of which have been answered below.

Does the screening process include questions targeted at male partners? If so, do any of the questions address males' health needs?

Yes, the screening does include some very basic questions around male health and his involvement in his female partner's life. Screening questions typically aim to clarify the level of involvement the father has in regards to home life (i.e., moderate, simple, some, none at all, etc.).

Although a health questionnaire may not necessarily be administered, the screening process can serve as an opportunity to connect men to a variety of available resources about which they may be unaware. During the screening, grantees can encourage men to properly connect with the services they may need. In lieu of a health questionnaire, local organizations can present on a variety of men's health issues, such as substance abuse, healthy relationships, and/or other topics that fall along the men's health spectrum.

What are some ways to engage incarcerated dads to foster attachment and bonding?

In some locations, a program may already fill this need. If there is a program already in place, HS grantees can reach out and facilitate a warm hand off to maintain connection and support. Some programs also have video visitation programs, allowing children to virtually connect with their incarcerated fathers.

In some HS programs, the home visiting continues for incarcerated men, but home visitors make trips to the jail instead of the house. Staying engaged with participants is vital even during incarceration to ensure that the client gets what he needs while in jail and, especially, upon his release.



Of the four recruitment sources mentioned by Kenneth Scarborough (Partners of Consumers, Community Partners, Men to Men Referrals, and Events and Activities), which one is the most successful in recruiting men/fathers?

Kenneth Scarborough confirmed that The Men to Men Referrals is the most successful recruitment source because the man conducting the assessment understands the committed level of interest in staying engaged. The Men to Men Referrals process includes the warm-up and trust building qualities required for successful group or program participation.

Do the barbers who participate in the Barbershop Talk Series receive training? What does barber recruitment look like?

Yes, the barbers do receive training. The training focuses on emphasizing the value of the material and the goal of accomplishing something deeper beyond a surface discussion with the male participants. Barbers who attend the training and commit to the program are expected to personify the values communicated in the sessions.

Tony reported that recruitment has been the easiest part given the use of social media. At this point, given how established the program has become, many barbers approach Tony independently. Tony finds that selecting the right person to do the job is essential to achieving a successful impression. Selected individuals must be passionate, driven, and accepting of the work load.